

REMARKS

In the present RCE, the independent claim, Claim 21, has been amended to clarify the present invention.

As now amended, Claim 21 is to a surface treating apparatus that has a treating chamber connected to an evacuating system, a melting /evaporating source for melting and evaporating a wire-shaped vapor-depositing material containing a vapor deposition controlling gas, disposed in the treating chamber, and a rotatable cage-shaped, work retaining member, disposed in the treating chamber, and spaced above the melting/ evaporating source, for retaining a work on which the vapor depositing material is deposited. A supply of wire-shaped vapor-depositing material is provided containing a predetermined amount of the vapor deposition controlling gas, wound about a feed reel with the feed reel being a horizontally disposed feed reel arranged such that the direction of winding of the wire-shaped vapor-depositing material on the feed reel is perpendicular to the direction of feeding of the wire-shaped vapor-depositing material to supply the wire-shaped vapor-depositing material containing the vapor deposition controlling gas to the melting/evaporating source, disposed in the treating chamber below the melting/evaporating source. Such a surface treating apparatus is not taught or suggested in the cited references.

In the prior Final Office Action, dated December 22, 2005, Claims 21, 14 and 15 were rejected on the basis of (1) anticipation under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) or obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in view of Steube 1 (U.S. 4,233,937); or (2) anticipation or obviousness in view of Steube II (U.S. 3,926,147); or (3) obviousness in view of a combination of Steube 1 or Steube II when combined with Satoh (JP-60-92466).

In the Office Action, it is alleged that Steube 1 shows a treating apparatus where a vacuum chamber contains a header for melting a wire-shaped vapor depositing material, such as aluminum. A reel of the wire is disposed so as to supply the same to a melting and evaporating heater. The Office Action alleges that the reel of wire “horizontally disposed”. Claim 21 has now been amended to provide that the horizontally disposed feed reel is “arranged such that the direction of winding of the wire-shaped vapor-depositing material containing the vapor deposition controlling gas on the feed reel is perpendicular to the direction of feeding” of the material to the melting/evaporating source. The Steube reference has no such “horizontal” disposition.

Also, the Office Action states that the apparatus is not limited to an apparatus using “a wire-shaped vapor-depositing material containing a vapor deposition gas”. Claim 21 has now been amended to provide “a supply of the wire-shaped vapor-depositing material containing the vapor deposition controlling gas”.

The Office Action further alleges that the wheels 30 in Steube 1 are a rotatable member disposed in the treating chamber. This is completely unrelated to the present rotatable member which contains the work. Claim 21 has been amended to provide a “rotatable cage-shaped, work retaining member”. This clearly distinguishes over the Steube wheels.

The Steube 11 reference shows a wire cage 18 to contain parts 20 that are treated but, like Steube 1 does not show the horizontal positioning of the feed wire as provided in amended Claim 21, or a supply of wire-shaped vapor-depositing material containing the vapor deposition controlling gas.

The Satoh patent is cited to show that aluminum wire conventionally used as a source material for vacuum evaporating coating typically or inherently contains hydrogen. Claim 21 has been amended such that the supply of wire-shaped vapor-depositing material contains “a

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predetermined amount” of the vapor deposition controlling gas. This further distinguishes over an inherently contained amount as in Satoh.

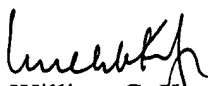
The contents of amended Claim 21 are not disclosed or suggested in the references cited and the claims are believed to be patentable over those references.

In view of the present amendment, Claims 21, 14 and 15 are believed to be patentable and in condition for allowance. Early action towards allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

In the event that any fees are due in connection with this paper, please charge our Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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